1:Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

succeeded in shearing the noro system of much of its political power. During the early part of the 18th century, there was an improvement in agricultural methods and in forestry conservation, associated with the name of the statesman, Hozui Saion (1682-1761).[18] Saion was a descendant of a Chinese who had settled at Kume near Naha. He is said to have planted several kinds of trees, including the pine, the Japanese redwood (sugi), and the maki (in Japanese; podocarpus ssp.) Saion is well remembered in Okinawa. In Matsuda, I was shown trees which were said to have been planted along the road to Ginoza during Saion's lifetime and at his inspiration. There are stories told in the forest areas like Matsuda, crediting Saion with intentionally inventing superstitions to prevent people from cutting down the trees. In 1951, a Saion commemorative stamp was issued, and his name is used frequently in forest conservation literature and in posters. Whether Saion was the medium through which agricultural techniques of Japan or China were introduced, or whether these improvements came from his own initiative and study of local conditions, I have been unable to determine. In any case, the teachings of Saion on agriculture and forestry must have reached to the rural areas, improving the agricultural possibilities and encouraging planting trees and preserving the forests, constantly subject to destruction through fire, carelessness, and merciless cutting for firewood, as has been the case in many parts of China. These improvements, with the advantages from the introduction of the sweet potato one hundred years earlier, took place within the framework of a political and social and religious system that had now been well established.

5

European Awareness of the Great Loochoo

The Loochooans were known to the Portugese through the trade centering at Malacca. The Portugese explorer Pinto had visited Tanegashima around 1542. Captain Broughton had been shipwrecked on Miyako to the south in 1798. But the western exploration of Okinawa itself was reserved for later times. During the nineteenth century, the Europeans, then the Americans, became aware of the people of the Great Loochoo.

The first detailed observations based on personal contact date from the works of Captain Basil Hall, and his surgeon, William M'Leod, who

[Text Continues TOP of P. 35--Analyst]

18 In the manuscript history reproduced by Leavenworth, there is this passage: "In the 20th year of Kyoho [1735], Hozui Saion fixed a system for the protection of forestry, and a forestry office and shipping office were established." Op. cit., 89. Saion's famous work, Eight Volumes of Forest Administration, I am told was destroyed in the war. Chamberlain, as cited, p. 310, says that Loochooan polity in the 17th century crystallized in a form it wore from then on.

The strong ties of the family system are probably the fundamental reasons for this lack of strangeness. One is a member of the family, even if in another part of the island or of the world. This sense of belonging, to be emphasized later, is not only an emotional feeling but is a basic fact of social organization. Relationships, regardless of their geographic spread, are a binding force. It is true that these become weaker with the remoter relationships of the extended family, but they are still strong enough to blunt the edge of individual frictions that might otherwise be expected.

There was a niche into which a returning person might fit, whether he was a parent, a first son, an elder brother, an uncle or niece of the head of the household. The repatriates who had been long absent were, in turn, able to make an adjustment to conditions in the island of their birth because they had continued the same social system in their foreign residence. They now had to function in a more restricted and less well endowed natural environment. Dissatisfactions took the form, as they still do, of longing for better economic opportunity which they hope will be realized through further opportunities for emigration. They make comparisons, unfavorable to Okinawa, regarding the ease of making a living in other countries. Repatriates from Japan, who have returned to Okinawan rural life, miss the cities and the more exciting life of that country. Among those who have travelled, there is also a more noticeable discontent and dissatisfaction with the loneliness of rural life. The word sabishii is often on their lips.

The ideas of the repatriated Okinawans, furthermore, are not a new phenomenon in contemporary village life. They did not bring back points of view unknown before. In the past these had been communicated by letters and rare visits to the homeland. The reports of the repatriates were richer, more detailed, and more concrete, but not completely different. They have--and this is probably one of their chief influences on post-war village life--stimulated the strong desire of the villagers to emigrate. Life is hard on the island, and their accounts of greater return for the same expenditure of work have quickened hopes of future emigration. These hopes are confined to the New World, Japan, and the Pacific islands. There is no enthusiasm for migration to other islands in the Ryukyu chain.

4

Attitudes Toward Birth Control

There is little in the religious belief or in the cultural tradition that would induce, in large segments of the population, a strong antipathy to birth control on religious grounds, but these beliefs and traditions are not favorable to it either. Respect for ancestors and the need for the continuance of the family system are the most important of these. It is the duty of each generation to provide this continuity between the past and the future. The links in this chain are male children. Once this

need of succession is met, birth control measures might be accepted. There is, it is true, a widespread feeling that many children are a happiness which artificial control should not destroy. But this feeling, especially true with women, is often lost after the fourth or fifth child when mothers may dread further child bearing.[7]

In the villages studied, there is an awareness of birth control. This awareness comes from conversation and reading, the primary sources being Japanese magazines and newspapers. I did not meet anyone who admitted practicing birth control or who desired to do so. According to the informants, it is not practiced at all. There may be some instances.

But birth control methods are not widely understood, and even if they were, it is doubtful that people would use them on their own initiative. The present apathy toward birth control methods may be due to the fact that only recently has the question been of any significance. In the past economic difficulties within a family were relieved by emigration. There was thus little need to think of a limited family. On the contrary, there was pride in a family that might spread over continents.

Historically, the whole emphasis in the family system has been on a large or a medium sized, not a limited, family, and this, even today, is tied in with family pride coming from having children and grandchildren. If families have girls to begin with, the feeling is all the stronger. Though unusual, it is not unheard of to have a family of girls, and even if there are sons, there should be enough of them to take care of the hazards of death.

5

Conclusion

Among some villagers--and this seems to be independent of the degree of education--there are now more realistic appraisals of what the soil and the land can make available to a growing population and to their own children. Emigration for the time being is not possible. And, even if it were on a broad scale, it would not only have to skim off the present excess population, but take continuing care of future natural increases as well.

There were in all the villages several considerations that have influenced these appraisals. Land is insufficient, even in quantity, though in local areas such as Matsuda, it might suffice for local demands. The arable land is also poor. The poor and insufficient land,

[TEXT Continues TOP of P. 69--Analyst]

7 This dread of continual child bearing is discussed as an attitude, not as a general truth. The statement is based on conversations with men and women in each of the villages. Many women in Okinawa would not agree with this, but the attitude, I am convinced, if not a prevailing one, is at least frequent enough to be worth recording as something more than individual distaste.

311
[242] Land appraisal made by people with long experience with the capabilities of their soils under traditional methods of farming, fertilization, and land reclamation is very old in the culture. This in itself is a very significant fact about the culture aside from the obvious technical utility of a land classification system. [550] Land classification is important as a tangible indication of wealth as appraised by representatives of the village. This classification [651] is the basis of taxation of land. A grade two rice paddy pays a lower tax than a grade one. The system of land classification also [433] provides a basis for estimating probable yields.

[632] Township officials are responsible for land classification on a township basis, but each village does its own. In Oushichan township (Hanashiro and Hinatogawa) the elected mayor and his appointed subordinates and local farmers who know the land well have set up the system based on classes and grades of land. In Ginoza-son, the mayor performs a similar function. Since each village has its land classification, a table of correspondences makes possible the comparison of equivalent grades. A composite system for the township can then be made. Grade three rice land in Matsuda, for example, may be equivalent to grade two rice land in Ginoza village. By listing all these together, a village wide classification is made.

The main classifications (tōkyū) of land found in all communities are: (1) Rice lands, (ta, tambo), (2) dry crop land (hatake). It is very difficult to translate the word hatake. So far the expression dry crop land has been used. This land may be contrasted with the wet rice fields; it is dry farming land, usually on rolling slopes or upland. It is land used for cultivation of domestic plants except rice and one or two other minor crops. Rice and dry crop land are the two main classes. (3) Genya land. This word is also difficult to translate. It is variously rendered as wild or waste land, but it is neither wild nor wasteland in an economic sense. It is best described negatively as land not suited for cultivation. Despite its low value, it is important land for its production of grass, reeds, firewood and plant shoots for domestic animals. It is vital in land [185] conservation. The genya land, sometimes on steep or gentle mountain slopes, sometimes cropping out in the midst of cultivated fields or rice paddies, with its dense growth of grass, its occasional pine tree or cycad effectively binds the soil and prevents disastrous run off and flash floods. Around the village of Hanashiro, genya land is rocky and most of its vegetation consists of grass with some shrubs. Before the war, this genya land had more pine and cycads than at present, and the disappearance of the cycad and pine furnished greater opportunity for the omnipresent miscanthus, though there are occasional regrowths of the pine. In Matsuda, the genya land often is indistinguishable from the forest. But the trees are less dense and the privately owned genya is interspersed with the small cultivated paddies and fields. (4) House sites (yashiki, takuchi). There are usually two classes: the first class site is convenient and on a main road or lane; the second class is inconvenient, a rear house, or one

731 313 the south over a period of centuries thus is related to water spray and wind damage, relationships which a wise administration cannot neglect. The deforestation of

121 The natural tendency is to think in terms of population and land and of the food which it can produce. But if the population is envisaged in terms of forest, the land, both cultivated and uncultivated, and the role of the uncultivated land in protecting the soil, broader understandings are possible.[9]

231 It is a significant fact, to use another example, that goats are tethered and not allowed to graze. They do not roam the hillsides, nor crop off the shoots of young plants. If they did, it is possible that legislation controlling the goat might have to be enacted such as has been done in the island of Cyprus.

311 731 185 It is important therefore, to ascertain how a culture makes use of its natural environment and also how it takes care of it. Typhoons cannot be controlled. Neither can periods of drought which often produce water shortages, prevent the planting of sweet potatoes, or the harvesting of a good rice crop. In areas where control is possible, the Okinawans have developed conservation measures. Almost one hundred years ago, Dr. D. S. Green, Fleet Surgeon attached to the frigate Mississippi on Perry's expedition to Japan, wrote:

175 185

> "Two objects seem to influence the islanders in all their operations, viz: the retention of water or moisture, and the avoidance of surface-washing. To effect these desirable ends, especially in a rolling country, a great quantity of grading is required, besides very deep culture; and here both of these have been done."[10]

000 In the areas studied, no serious sheet erosion was observed.

[Text continues TOP of P. 157 -- Analyst]

9 The general ideas and points of view expressed by Edward Grahan in his Natural principles of land use, London, New York, and Toronto, 1944, are pertinent here.

10 Hawks, Perry's expedition to Japan, as cited, II, 26-27. The emphasis is in the original. Green continues with further details of grading around streams, along ravines, and on the uplands. His description today would still fit many parts of Okinawa. He was particularly impressed with the lands on a journey between Nugah (i.e., Nago) and Tanegah, southwest of Unten. His whole passage is well worth reading.

Two other forms of land conservation and maintenance, crop rotation and fertilizers, will be discussed under agriculture.

In the areas studied, no serious sheet erosion was observed. No doubt this may be a problem in parts of Okinawa, but it is doubtful that this menace will threaten the habitability of the island. Occasionally one can see a freshly hoed field on a slope that is losing its soil during a downpour. But the fact that the hills and mountains are covered with vegetation, are not too steep, and that grasses and shrubs are cut off allowing the stubble with the roots to remain in the soil effectively binds the soil of the hills and at the same time prevents flash floods. With the exception of stony soils, the land of the areas studied had a plant cover. This statement is not inconsistent with the previous remarks regarding deforestation, as the disappearance of the pine, the cycad, and the pandanus has been offset by the spread of kaya (miscanthus) grass. Boundary paths also keep the soil in place. They often roughly follow the slope and are sufficiently crooked and winding and of sufficient depth to prevent washing away of large quantities of soil. While there is no complex irrigation system in these areas, the small ditches which carry the water down the slope are winding and covered on their borders by weeds. Occasionally one can see a farmer shovelling up the soil accumulated in a natural catchment in a bend of one of these ditches and restoring the lost soil to his land.

134 133 137 185 [487] [317]

In all areas, equally simple devices to protect the soil could be observed. Roadside borders of stone, like the stone of a rock garden, often line the fields adjoining main roads. (One could write a long essay on stones and the part they play in the culture of the people). These stones come from the fields. If fields do not have stone borders, weeds are left to grow. They are cropped, but the roots are left in the soil. In Hanashiro, stone fences on slopes and contour breaks are a common sight. Sometimes these have the appearance of blunt wedges, the end of the wedge going up the ravine. These stones have been painstakingly gathered from nearby areas.

185 417

Terracing is practiced in a crude form in these areas. It really is step or bench cultivation, the plots being above one another in step like order. The function of terracing is, in the case of the dry crop land, to bring more land under cultivation, protecting it from washing away; in the case of the rice fields, it supplies flat land for cultivation at different levels. In the areas studied, terracing did not go all the way up the mountain side, although this practice can be observed in parts of Okinawa.

185 241

Very frequently the ledges of the terraces are covered with a border of weeds or cropped grass which prevent soil runoff down the hill. In the Matsuda area, rice is grown up a narrow mountain valley, or ravine, with trees and shrubbery on the hillsides growing to the very edge of the cultivated plots. In rice terracing, the boundary paths often divide one step from another with openings in the ditches to allow the passage of water to the level below.

311 Slow conversion of land to arable fields is constantly going on in situations in which the amount of labor involved is not even considered. One such activity in the Hinatogawa area is typical. [134] Originally the field could not be worked because of the large quantities of smaller boulders, stones, and pebbles, all small enough to be carried off, too numerous to encourage hopes for quick [412] transformation. With difficulty this land is worked with the short handled broad bladed hoe. The hoes with two or three prongs are [462] used for softer soils. This hard hoeing is often done by women. The surface stones are thrown aside into little piles along the road. [491] These can now be sold for use in road construction. The vegetation on the surface is also turned under. Later in the year, after the rain has gone into the loosened soil, it is hoed again, and this time it is possible to go in deeper. Weeds, rice straw, unused miscanthus straw from the pig or goat pen may be added, and this is allowed to rot in the soil. Then the field is hoed again, and the deeper rocks and stones, and those left behind before, are unturned and the process is repeated. In the end, and this period may vary from one to several years depending on the quantity of stones, the farmer has a plot of [134] land, of a rich chocolate brown color, of fair texture and fertility, suitable for growing sweet potatoes.

133 311 In Matsuda, there is a slightly different situation. The topography here has a different character than that of the south. Hills, caves, sinks, and slopes are everywhere, and as a consequence, cultivation is more scattered. In the southern villages, land use follows a more recognizable pattern. The low flat areas are used for rice, the higher parts of the flat land and the slopes and the rolling upland for dry crop land, while the highest parts on the hill or mountain summits are in grasses, shrubs, and scattered scrub trees. In Matsuda, these are all mixed up. Rice may be growing in a genya area. In another part of the village, sweet potatoes may, in a similar situation, be the rule. This crazy-quilt pattern of rice, genya and dry crop land, all adjoining, stimulates the gradual conversion of genya to arable land. When rice is made out of the genya land the converted plot is known in Okinawan as gata. It is a laborious process of clearing, removing stones, hoeing, cutting perpendicular sides, making a hard surface to contain the water for the rice that will be grown. In some sections of Matsuda, the very small valleys have been converted to S-shaped rice plots.

311 134 Casual observers often see unused land and conclude that large amounts can be reclaimed. They do not see the stones, or the hard-rock which may be an inch or two below the surface. They would do well to look at village maps to see how these lands are regarded by the villagers who have tilled them. Probably more efficient conversion and reclamation could be carried on with machinery and with the generous use of fertilizers.

311 185 In the desire for more land, it should not be overlooked that the great conservation value of genya land and the poorer upland

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

plots lies in their being as they are, separating one cultivated area from another, binding the soil, and that they are probably serving their best purposes now, as they have in the past, in furnishing this protection.

The conservation practices of the Okinawans are at least in part a consequence of the topography. The care of upland areas and rolling hills is imperative. For a great deal of cultivation takes place here. Unlike China, there is not a strong contrast between large scale paddy rice in alluvial soils and the relative neglect of upland areas with deforestation and erosion. In China the meticulous care of the transported soils of the lowlands and the neglect of the uplands is a striking aspect of the attitude toward land. This is true, perhaps to a lesser degree, of Japan.[11]

In Okinawa there are insufficient delta plains and alluvial soils to provide these contrasts between lowland and upland agriculture. The scarcity of river deltas and alluvial plains means relatively little rice and the use of the rolling hills and the steeper sides of mountains. This necessity has enforced a care of the uplands. It is true that one often sees sweet potatoes or other dry crops growing in rows up and down a hill instead of along contours, and that there seems often to be a lack of appreciation of the consequences of misuse of forest land through clear cutting. But in the main in the use of the uplands for cultivation, the weed borders or rock fences, and other simple devices keep the soils from erosion. The relatively gentle topography has also contributed to this achievement.

4

Fragmentation and Consolidation

Fragmentation of land is common in Okinawa. Ownership of contiguous plots of land is not the general rule. It is a basic fact of land tenure and influences land use and agricultural practice. This fragmentation is a deterrent to the use of machinery, unless cooperatively owned or unless certain individuals specialize in the

11 See James Thorp, Geography of the soils of China, Nanking 1936, especially Chapters xii-xiv. Gourou, Pierre. The development of upland areas in China, and Trewartha, Glenn T., Utilization of Upland areas in Japan. In: The development of upland areas of the Far East, Vol. I. (Institute of Pacific Relations), New York, 1949. Trewartha describes his surprise in his earlier studies of Japan and his acquaintance "with the fact that the Japanese, like most Orientals, greatly deprecate the value of upland or non-irrigated sites for agricultural land use." (p. 59). This choosiness is not possible for the Okinawans.

The truck or horsecart of the buyer comes to the stonecutting area, the blocks are loaded and taken away. Prior to sale, for convenience, stone may be taken from the cutting area. It is loaded on horse carts, the men carrying the heavy blocks by means of ropes looped around the ends of the stone and over poles which in turn rest on the shoulders. A six foot length (1 ken linear measure), one foot wide and about ten inches thick sells for ¥140 (1951-52).

Foot injuries are the chief hazards of this occupation. The toes may be accidentally cut by the long chisel, and there is danger of bruising or crushing by accidentally dropping the block, or by rolling when it is being dislodged. Very hard and calloused hands are the mark of the stonecutter; his hands are especially conspicuous for the hard, raised areas on the palm around the base of the fingers, the result of the constant lifting and pounding of the long chisel. There is also danger to the eyes in flying chips but few use glasses or goggles.

Like some phases of fishing, this work is for the young and the physically mature men. After the middle forties or early fifties, a man no longer does the heavy work and confines himself to lighter chores. The very old and the retired may chip and finish the foundation and the pyramidal stones.

If a cutter is unable to extract all the stone in a plot whose stone he has bought, there are also customary solutions. When the father dies, his son continues the workings and returns the field to the owner. If a stone worker moves to another village when only half the work has been done, he arranges for a friend, relative, or neighbor to take over the remaining part.

4

Restoring the Land

Formerly excavations (which might be 10 or 15 feet deep and the size of a large room) were refilled by the buyer of the stone rights. Rocks, pebbles, and miscellaneous trash were used as fill, but following the war there has been a heavy demand for rock and stone for road construction. As a consequence, many excavations are now only partly refilled. After refilling, houses are built on the sites of formerly excavated land. Here and there one can see sweet potatoes or vegetables growing on land which formerly was covered with stone. The original state of the land, its appearance after excavation and its restoration may be seen in Figure 2. Evidences of this reclamation may be seen throughout the stoneworking area.

Minatogawa, because it lacks vegetation for protective and decorative purposes, is a good example of the use and adaptation of stone to local needs. There are still stone fences, waist or shoulder height, and many small stone boundary lines, a foot or two and of uneven height. Coral stones, weathered by the sea, honeycombed and pocked, are seen everywhere.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

1

An Historical View of the Okinawan Forest

Northern Okinawa is the woodshed of the island, and there is a steady stream of lumber for building, poles for a variety of uses, charcoal, and of small bundles of wood for the people of the south. In the village of Matsuda, the forest is part of the daily life and economic well-being of the people. 313

Little is known of the past history of the Okinawan forest. 137 174

> "Though it is impossible now to determine the nature and distribution of the original forest cover, it seems reasonable that the major part of Okinawa was originally covered by trees. The forest was probably absent from the beaches, a few marsh areas behind the beaches, rock ledges upon which trees could gain a foothold, and perhaps some areas of Regosols (shallow soils) from calcareous clays in the southern part of the island. It is evident that the present forest has been cut over many times. There seems to be no part of the island in which the forest cover has not been disturbed in some way by man."[1] [311]

The virgin stands have disappeared and left few clues, these authors continue, but it is likely that the original forest cover was comparable to the present stands in composition of species. The authors point out the relationship of cutting to settlement. Cutting must have been a continuing process. In Saion's time, in the 18th century, there was considerable tree planting and measures were taken to protect groves of trees for their value as windbreaks. Excessive cutting could hardly have taken place in olden times in the central areas of the north, whose trees, even today, can be reached only by footpath. No doubt in the past cutting has spread out from village sites and travelled roads. Fire may have been one cause of deforestation, as it has been used to clear land. There are still instances of this. 137 311 174 [245]

In Okinawa, the period from 1879 to the end of the Russo-Japanese war seems to have been one of widespread deforestation. (This was contemporary also with the reckless deforestation in the New World). The period after 1906 reflected Japanese concern with forest preservation, especially of the nationally owned forests, a program pursued with varying degrees of success. [185]

1 Okinawa forests (U.S. Geological Survey. Mil. Geol. Sect., Office of the Engineer, GHQ, FEC), 1948, 2.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

137 311 [419] settled area and for protection of the surrounding crops. Around houses, there are common stone fences, bamboo fences and trees. Stone fences, though solid may be toppled over. Bamboo, or dwarf bamboo fences, seemingly slight, resist the winds and remain intact because of their flexible loose weave.

137 133 185 [418] [419] [193] The trees on the ridges of the low lying hills or on high pieces of ground are tall, and sturdy, and jealously protected. The villagers take great pride in them. Today this pride is based on the realisation of their effectiveness; in former times, their protection was associated with the worship of the gods of the sacred grove (utaki). There were beliefs, which now seem to be dying out, that cutting these trees would bring bad luck. Many villagers say that Saion in the 18th century intentionally invented superstitions concerned with the cutting of the trees in order to save them. Now these trees are no longer in danger of cutting, even though the penalties of the old beliefs are no longer feared.

The following short list does not exhaust the kinds of trees and plants found in this area. It is confined to those trees, shrubs, and grasses which are most frequently found and which have the greatest local importance.

829 313 (1) The Ryukyuan pine (Riukiu-matsu in Japanese, Pinus luchuensis Mayr). This tree is still one of the commonest sights of the island, even in southern Okinawa. At present, it is a source of firewood, cheap lumber, and siding. It is not considered good housebuilding material because of termites (shiroari). Pine was used for fishing boats within living memory, but now they are made of much harder woods. In this area, the coniferous groves are along the seashore. The larger stands are not cut. Scrub pine on individually owned wild land may be cut for firewood.

(2) The fukugi (Darcinia spicata Hook.). The fukugi is used around homes and on mountain ridges as a typhoon protection. It is fairly plentiful here and prised as a building material (kenchikuzai). The hard studs, beams and cross beams and the wide plank floors in the older and better houses are often made out of this wood.

(3) The iju (Schima luchuensis Nak.). This tree, common here, is used as a building material and is considered to be better than the Japanese redwood (sugi). It is not regarded as a good firewood.

(4) The inumaki (Podocarpus macrophyllum D. Don). This tree is not well known here, and there are no large specimens. But it is regardod as the best building material when available. Often the large, hard, rough hewn poles which are placed on stones and support the eaves of the older houses are made from this wood.

(5) The shii (Shiia cuspidata). The dense stands of this tree in the village owned forest restrict the size of the specimens, though

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Every three years, the villagers thin out the dwarf bamboo and other grasses in the pine stands along the coast. Late in December or in early January, there is a community planting of pine seeds.

The tools used in forest work are: the hand sickle (kama), a bill or hook knife, the tool so familiar in agriculture; an ordinary long knife resembling a butcher knife or a machete (here called a yamakatana, or "mountain knife"), and a hooked knife on the end of a long handle (zŏringama).

Forest care goes well back into Okinawan history and antedates more recent Japanese methods. This care probably was an obligation in the old system of land tenure under which villagers had access to forest lands with the corresponding obligation to replant.

4

An Example of Reclamation

There are cut-over tracts in Matsuda village. The Japanese government, according to local residents, tried to convert these cleared areas into agricultural land. This land reclamation (kaitaku) began about 1935. The land was cleared of its remaining trees and shrubs mainly by firing. (Fire has been used in Okinawa, possibly from early times, in the clearing of land. In 1947 the use of fire in clearing and the hazards in creating forest fires were pointed out by observers who blamed carelessness in firing as the cause of the forest fires in the dry season).[10] Firing was easier and some nutrients from the ash were available to the poor soils.

In Matsuda, the cleared land was hoed and the rocks were removed. It had to be hoed deeply to make cultivation possible. The land was enriched with composts containing horse, pig, and goat manures. The original plan was to promote a more extensive type of agriculture on the reclaimed land because it was poorly adapted to the cultivating methods on the better and more accessible soils. A here-and-there (yadori type) settlement was planned. The houses were to be scattered on hillsides, or in the valleys, to provide sufficient land, admittedly poor, for the settlers to cultivate. The size of the contemplated holdings precluded hand labor of the intensity characteristic of the usual agriculture. The use of draft animals, plows, and harrows was part of the plan.

The war and the disappearance of so many of the draft animals prevented its realization. Before the war, it was intended that each family should have a 3000 tsubo tract (2.45 acres). Today the residents on these lands cultivate only about 1000 tsubo, about the limit of manual cultivation considering the soils and the stone that remains. As a consequence, parts of the area are returning to weeds, grasses, and shrubs.

10 Okinawa forests, as cited, 7.

1:Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

trees of the sacred grove and used old beliefs to preserve the forests. Formerly it was believed that misfortune would come to him who cut a tree in groves sacred to these gods. If the trees were cut, the god would become angry, the person cutting the tree would be the victim of self-induced illness and by worrying about his deed, gradually would become ill, and perhaps die. These sacred groves, whose religious significance is now almost ignored, are arranged to enclose the village from three directions, with the open side on the south. On the north was the sacred grove in the back (ushiro no utaki) or the grove of the white gold mountain (kinpuku utaki in Okinawan). The mountain gods were supposed to live here. On the west was the grove in front (mae no utaki) on the white silver mountain. This was also known as the fire shrine.

The priestesses also had a hand in this worship of the mountain gods. There are about seven of these places of worship now, and there is still a voluntary caretaker, an old woman with tattooed hands, a family priestess (nigami) in the old system. Occasionally one sees an old woman going to a grove to pray. The only other visitors are the farmers who walk along the paths of the grove on their way to the fields.

7

Other Religious Observances

There are a few other observations which may have some interest. Old women use patches of grass or knotted rice straw to ward off the spirits on days when they are thought to be abroad in great numbers. At the festival of the autumnal equinox, knotted or braided grass (shiba) is placed in various parts of the house. In some houses, bunches are suspended from the cross beams, perhaps three or four bunches to the side. They may be placed in the toilet, at the entrance to the house compound, on the water barrel in the kitchen, on the front and back of fishing boats, or in the interior of the house. Blades of miscanthus grass may be tied around the neck of a bean paste jug (misogami). Spirits, plentiful at this time, are frightened away by the patches of grass and will not enter. The young, while not believing in this, acquiesce to avoid making the old angry.

When a death anniversary is being celebrated, there may be a blade of miscanthus, a rice straw, or a knotted blade of grass on the top of a box of candies or sweet meats to prevent the intrusion of evil spirits. A blade of grass (the san) is occasionally tied around the handle of a tea pot. For the first week after a family death, tea is served from a pot which has this blade of grass. But these are almost invariably the observances of the old and are only infrequently seen. These customs, observed in Hinatogawa, are said to survive among the very old in the other villages.

In Matsuda, a rice rope (shimenawa) was observed at one home. The rice rope, a Shinto symbol, is not common in Okinawan culture. This

Although a number of important shrines and worship places are located in the Kawata area, the main shrine is in Taira.

To this tranquil area the activities of World War II brought a great upheaval. Although the main stream of refugees from the south, following threats of United States troops' invasion, did not reach this northern area, Japanese guerilla forces settled in the hills of Higashi township. This, and the constant warnings from the Japanese of the "terrors" of American occupation, caused the population of all villages to take refuge in the mountains, carrying along what few possessions they could, including livestock. Families were separated and individuals lived in constant fear of soldiers from both sides. Nightly excursions to the fields to harvest whatever could be found helped to maintain a meager diet. It is characteristic of the stresses of this period that among the children of central Taira only one was born in 1945.

The war ended for Taira people when American troops had cleared the northern areas of Japanese troops. In this action several villages were destroyed, among them Taira. The present economic struggle of Higashi township, an area which was always handicapped by lack of farmland and poor soil, is partly due to the war. On the other hand, the demand for lumber for an island-wide reconstruction program lent a temporary boom to the economy. In the process, however, forests [185] which had been heavily cut before the war fell prey to rapid and poorly planned cutting. At present the whole township is in the throes of economic readjustment.

In the past 50 years, Taira, like the rest of Okinawa, has sent some of its overflow of population to various areas in the world, including Japan, and especially to the industrial areas of Kobe and Osaka, Saipan, and Brazil. At least five of the families in central Taira lived either in Japan or the Pacific Islands and returned shortly after World War II. Emigrants to Brazil have stayed with the exception of one prominent person who returned to Taira several years before the war. Some of the families lived as many as 18 or 20 years abroad, and several children in the study were born in Japan and returned to the village as infants. Among the villagers are many who have served in the Japanese Army in Asia or in the South Seas.

The repatriation of these families does not seem to have caused any serious disturbances to the village, since many people were killed during the war and several families moved to the city. An exodus to the [311] outlying areas of the village also provided room for returnees, so, although rice land is scarce, there is still some uncultivated farmland, admittedly mostly of poor quality.

The community is dispersed. In the outlying parts, as far as 2 miles

But actually no family is entirely self-sufficient, for each needs to purchase foodstuff as well as ready-made clothes, manufactured mostly in Japan, more substantial building materials, such as better grades of wood, tiles, and cement, tobacco, alcoholic beverages, sweets, toilet articles, some medical supplies, and other luxuries. Farmers buy their tools; students their books and writing materials. Finally, cash is needed to pay taxes.

In addition to the utilization of sugar, pineapple, firewood, and building materials for cash, Tairans also raise pigs for sale to slaughter houses, and some families derive an income from raising silkworms and producing tea. Fishermen sell fish inside and outside the village, and a small group of people are salaried workers or have an income from specialized services.

Village leaders fear dependence on rapidly dwindling forest resources, still the main source of ready cash. They realize that the present modest living conditions of all families could be much improved if Tairans concentrated on increasing the cultivation of subsistence crops and farmed more intensively to raise cash crops. Most people lack this insight, however, and live on a day-to-day basis without much thought of the future. This is an island-wide problem which has the attention of central government agencies, and a great deal of educational propaganda comes to the village through government channels.

AGRICULTURE

The productivity of the land varies not only with its quality but also with the industriousness of the owners. Farmers who show foresight, those who seem to be under less pressure for immediate cash, take off more time from forest work to cultivate fields during planting season. The village headman and council members remind everybody during village meetings and informal discussions that work in the fields should not be neglected. With the approval of the whole community, the first and 15th of each lunar month have been set aside for farming. On these two days it is forbidden to go to the forests to cut wood. Such agreements are usually observed (as a rule), and they help to achieve their purpose but are not completely effective.

Rice is planted and harvested twice a year. The first rice is prepared in January when seeds are put into special beds where they are left to grow into young shoots until March. Until about 30 years ago it was said that all people seeded rice on the same day while prayers were

of the permanent Tairan families fish; the majority of the fishermen only two 226 are migrants from the surrounding islands who come for a season, [166] leaving their families behind. A few families have moved in permanently. The fishermen supply Taira, but most of the catch is peddled [438] in the Nago market by the fishermen's wives. Some of the more enterprising and mercantile-minded women in the village buy up fish and [443] peddle it for a profit.

Two or three times a year, during February or March, large fishing 226 boats from Henza Island land in Taira with whale meat. All the able 443 women look forward to making extra cash at this time, for whale meat is considered a delicacy in homes where meat is rare. Blubber is eaten [262] and used as frying fat. The distribution of whale meat is arranged by one village woman whose fishermen relatives from Henza supply it in response to her request. She acts as agent, distributing the meat to the women on consignment.

LUMBERING

The main source of immediate cash for most families is firewood. 313 Forest land in the mountains is owned by the township and the village, [423] except for some woods near the fields, which are personal property. The township permits the village to exploit a certain region surround- [651] ing the community in return for payment of a forest tax. This tax is levied on firewood bundles or on lumber sold by villagers. Everyone in the village is free to cut wood in the designated area in any amount he desires. This, however, does not imply that unlimited cutting is possible, for resources have been utilized so heavily that most forests near the village are almost cleaned out, and it has become increasingly difficult to find wood. Reforestation has only recently been introduced [185] on a serious scale. Often villagers are found trespassing on land owned [423] by the central Ryukyan government in order to cut from the less de- [685] pleted forests there. Government officials are sympathetic to the villagers' plight, and they tend to dispose of such transgressions with a stern warning.

Men and women, and during vactions, some children over 12 years, [957] go to the forest. Most people prefer to walk and work in small groups. To reach a place high up in the hills, they may have to hike almost a mile from the center of Taira. The steep, narrow paths made by wood- [487] cutters traverse the mountains. Following the approach trails during the day, one can hear voices and the sawing of wood from many directions. All lumber people carry a short handsaw and a heavy bush knife [412]

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

602 476 on one's mother's side and, after marriage, the wife's family. In seeking mutual assistance for rice planting, house building and other undertakings, such relatives may be approached. In other words, kin, neighbors, and members of the same geographical section of the village participate almost equally in mutual assistance groups. Maternal relatives join in family celebrations and in the discussion of family matters. Since many decisions are made jointly with the help of relatives, there are frequent occasions for the kindred to gather in the evening at one house or another.

561 Each Okinawan also belongs to an age group. As will be described in the section on socialization, beginning at kindergarten an Okinawan becomes associated with a group of boys and girls who will remain his 575 653 companions through school. As a member of junior high school he will join the formal Student's Association, which is responsible for certain community projects. High school students and all unmarried young adults belong to the Young People's Association, which is both a social group and a cooperative work group.

575 185 562 After marriage there are several associations which one may join. Adult married women who are under 57 belong to the Women's Association, which is affiliated with an island organization dedicated to "modernizing" women's lives. The organization is lead by a few women who are in contact with the district and island organization. They attempt at semisocial gatherings to introduce changes aimed at easing 262 the burdens of daily life and the pressure of poverty. For example, they are trying to influence the women to return to making their own bean paste rather than spending precious cash. The leaders show the women how to make bean paste and encourage them to set aside one work-free day a month to catch up with neglected housework. Many of the efforts of the organization, however, are not too successful. Most women go back to their homes and find that the accustomed ways are easier to follow. One has learned to live with economic pressures and tradition and established custom is a strong force. So the few forward-looking women have a difficult task in rallying others.

Both adult married males and females may also join an organization similar in objective—the Home Improvement group. Although the men who are village leaders belong to this association, the majority of the members are the same women who are leaders in the Women's Association.

575 887 623 Before World War II there was an association of older men.* Although this group seldom, if ever, meets, it still sends a representative to the village council and to a few village functions.

* Apparently of relatively recent origin.

up; he is made to find most of his needs satisfied by his mother and then he is told that he may be given away if he is not obedient; later he is made to believe that the spirits of his ancestors are protecting him, but when he becomes ill he is told that it is because he has not given them enough offerings. The threat in each of these instances is abandonment, being cut off from his family, because of insufficiency---disobedience or unfiliality. The fear that this threat creates does much to maintain the family system. It probably also accounts for the fear Okinawans seem to have of being alone, and their frequent use, remarked upon by several observers, of the word 'sabishii', "lonely". It may also account for their frequently expressed view of Okinawa itself as a lonely, remote, and neglected island. 152 593 [829]

Family life also provides the individual with a pattern for human relationships. In the family he learns what behavior is appropriate to the status of older sibling and younger sibling, parent and child, male and female; he learns about authority, responsibility, and mutual obligation. This pattern of relationships learned in the family he reads into the larger society, and, entering the larger society he assumes the roles learned in the family. He defers to seniors; he expects juniors and females to defer to him. If he is a farmer he may expect instruction and support from the government, as a child expects it from his parents. If he is an official or a teacher he may at times deliberately speak down to the less educated and at other times deliberately speak over their heads, as a parent does with his children. 593 867

It seems that several phenomena of recent years should have weakened the old family system. The war destroyed much of the physical reminders of the past and nearly every family lost one or more of its members. The subsequent shift in population further uprooted many. The repatriation brought back people who had long been away, and with them, new ideas. The American occupation has given rural Okinawans a mobility they could not have imagined before. It has provided jobs for many of the younger people, which could mean a degree of economic independence that they could never have had otherwise. The schools have given young people of the opposite sexes more opportunity to meet on a respectable basis than they had ever had before. Yet we find families carrying on in spite of the shift in residence and the loss of important members, repatriates being reintegrated into the larger kin groups, and young people who might be independent turning their earnings over to their elders and asking their elders' permission to marry. Obviously family ties are still strong. 593 178 177

But the structure of the family may still be changing. The relationship between the behavior of individuals in the family and in the larger society is a reciprocal one. It is quite likely that the individual takes the roles that he has learned as a child in the family and plays them as an adult in the larger society, as he interprets its structure. But it is also likely that if the larger society is in a process of change, the individual may reinterpret his roles or even learn new ones to conform to the new structure. He may then go back to his family as a parent and reinterpret its structure on the basis of what he has learned. His behavior as a parent then becomes different from his father's before him. One of the professed aims of the Civil Administration on Okinawa is the democratization of Okinawan society. [185]